

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Stony Creek Plantation

other names/site number Shell House

VA DHR Number 026-0092

2. Location

street & number Route 624 (14203 Hills Drive)

not for publication

city or town De Witt

vicinity

state Virginia

code VA

county Dinwiddie

code 053

Zip 23840

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

 entered in the National Register

 See continuation sheet.

 determined eligible for the

National Register

Date of Action

 See continuation sheet.

 determined not eligible for the National Register

 removed from the National Register

 other (explain):

Signature of Keeper

7. Description**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)

_____ Georgian _____

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____ brick and stone _____
roof _____ metal _____
walls _____ wood weatherboard _____
other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheet

8. Statement of Significance**Applicable National Register Criteria** (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- _____ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- _____ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- x C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- _____ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- _____ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- _____ B removed from its original location.
- _____ C a birthplace or a grave.
- _____ D a cemetery.
- _____ E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- _____ F a commemorative property.
- _____ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Stony Creek Plantation
Dinwiddie County, VA

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

☐ Architecture _____

Period of Significance ☐ Ca. 1750--1950 _____

Significant Dates ☐ ca. 1750 _____
☐ 1872 _____

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation _____ N/A _____

Architect/Builder ☐ Unknown _____

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheets

9. Major Bibliographical References**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Name of repository: ☐ Virginia Department of Historic Resources _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ☐ Approximately 25 acres _____

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceStony Creek Plantation
Dinwiddie County, VA

1 18 263920 4108370_ 2 18 263820 4108090_
3 18 263540 4108090_ 4 18 263540_4108370_
____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: _____ John G. Zehmer, Director, Capital Region Office

Organization: _____ Virginia Department of Historic Resources _____ date _____ August, 2002 _____

street & number: _____ 19B Bollingbrook Street _____ telephone _____ (804)-863-1621 _____

city or town _____ Petersburg _____ state _____ VA _____ zip code _____ 23803 _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____ Louis Shell, Attorney-in-fact _____

street & number _____ P. O. Drawer 3090 _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ Petersburg _____ state _____ VA _____ zip code _____ 23850 _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Stony Creek Plantation
Dinwiddie County, VA**

Section 7 **Page** 1

Summary Description:

The original section of the T-shaped frame house at Stony Creek Plantation in Dinwiddie County, Virginia is a rare survival of a mid-18th-century dwelling. To the original three-bay, center-hall plan, story-and-a-half house a two-story perpendicular section was added in 1872. Its massive Flemish-bond chimneys are unique in the county and rare in the state. Though the mantels of the two first-floor rooms in the older section no longer exist, the baseboards, floors, doors and the handsome closed-string stair with turned balusters all survive. The second-floor doors have original foliated H-L hinges. A rare survival has been found in the area where the roof of the 1872 addition intersects (and covers) the center of the front slope of the 18th-century section. On that slope, under the new roof, the original center dormer survives. It has lost its sash, but round-end wooden shingles still sweep across the valley where the gable roof of the dormer intersects the main roof.

Detailed Description:

The only surviving resource at Stony Creek Plantation is the T-shaped dwelling. It consists of two parts: a story-and-a-half mid-18th-century section forming the top of the T and a two-story 1872 section forming the stem of the T. The foot of the T is the south-facing front of the house and features a simple three-bay, one-story, shed-roofed porch. There are a group of three small one-story later additions to the west end of the top of the T. All parts are of wood frame construction. The 1872 section has a side hall plan with two rooms on each floor. They are finished with typical woodwork of that period.

The 1½-story section is an 18th-century structure, presumed to have been begun about 1750, and is certainly one of the oldest houses in Dinwiddie County. It is a classic Colonial farmhouse with a center stair hall flanked by single rooms on each side. At the east end is a massive double-shouldered chimney featuring a stack, L-shaped in section, and flat paved weatherings. The chimney is in Flemish bond with random glazed headers. There are diagonal rows of headers parallel to the slope of the first-level weatherings. At the west end is a smaller Flemish-bond chimney with only one set of shoulders and a tall stack, rectangular in section. Other original features include three dormers with gable roofs on the north side and two on the south. They have later sashes. The windows in the walls have original paneled shutters but only one has old sash. The shutters on the south front each have a small square panel above two elongated panels.

Section 7 **Page** 2

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Stony Creek Plantation
Dinwiddie County, VA**

Those on the north side each have the square panel in the center. The center entrance to the hall on the north side features double doors with three raised panels in each leaf.

The foundation of the old section is brick under the east room and stone beneath the hall and west room (at least where visible on the north side). This may indicate that the east room was a single-cell dwelling to which the hall and west room were added. The house sits very low to the ground (and since the site slopes away in all directions, it is unlikely to have risen significantly over time.) The flanking rooms are 16 feet square.

The hall is a full 10 feet wide, a bit more generous than many small houses of that era. The stair has closed stringers ascending in two flights divided by a lateral landing running the full width of the north hall wall. There are turned balusters and a molded rail. Under the landing first-floor closets flank the north door. In the west room later wall surfaces and masonry have been removed to reveal the original wide segmental-arched fireplace opening.

On the upper floor small doors serve each of the rooms that flank the hall. Both have four tall heavy rectangular panels and foliated iron H-L hinges. The doorframes are finished with unusual molded architraves. There is evidence of two different applications of plaster.

From the upper stair landing, there is access (through the original center dormer of the old roof) to the crawl space between the original roof and the roof of the later section. This offers the opportunity to study the early wooden-shingle roof and its dormer. The discovery of the presence of the fanned shingles where the dormer roof meets the main roof is a rare survival.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Stony Creek Plantation
Dinwiddie County, VA**

Summary Statement of Significance

Stony Creek Plantation has been connected with prominent Dinwiddie County, Virginia families from the third quarter of the middle of the 18th century to the present day. The original section of the house is one of the oldest structures in the county. Its massive Flemish-bond chimneys are reminiscent of late 17th- and early 18th-century work. The elegant closed string stair with turned balusters is a feature of great refinement in so small a house. The surviving door architraves and foliated hinges on the second floor are important documents in the study of colonial architecture in Virginia according to scholars from both the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Like so many houses it was later enlarged, but here the form and details of the older portion remain. In fact the new roof of the later section shelters a wood-shingle-roofed dormer that has not seen a ray of light or a drop of rain for over 130 years. The shingles themselves are even older and are important artifacts in the study of Colonial craftsmanship. This offers an opportunity to inspect roof construction that may well be 250 years old.

Significance:

The land now known as "Stony Creek Plantation" is part of a tract of 250 acres on both sides of White Oak Swamp granted to Thomas Gregory in what was then Prince George County (now Dinwiddie) that was surveyed in 1720s, but not completed until 1731. By the late 1730s the Prince George records show that Thomas Gregory was in financial straits. His death date is not known.

In March 1745, 770 acres were patented to Thomas Scott for property on both sides of Stony Creek and extending up into the area around White Oak and Butterwood Creeks. The wording of the property description shows that Scott had purchased the adjoining Gregory property prior to buying this 770 acres. The combined land constituted the size of the plantation until 1861. Thomas Scott was the son of John Scott, Jr., and Amy Goodwyn who were married in 1720 or 1721. Thomas Scott's father and grandfather, John Scott, Sr., both died in 1724. At about 2 years old, Thomas Scott inherited his grandfather's mill in present-day Prince George County. His mother took over the operation of the mill on behalf of her son in 1726. By the time of the 1745 patent, Thomas Scott had reached majority and was presumably well versed in milling. It is reasonable to assume that he built the first part of the present house. He also established a mill

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Stony Creek Plantation
Dinwiddie County, VA

nearby on Stony Creek. It appears that he lived there and operated the mill until his death in 1784 or 1785 (when the land books begin to list the properties as "Major Thomas Scott's Estate"). Thomas Scott's sons, Francis and James Scott, eventually owned the house and mill tracts totaling 1,013 acres (either by inheritance or division) and, in 1811, sold the properties to William Call. From 1816 through 1823 the land was shown in Call's estate.

In 1824 it was shown in the ownership of Richard Noble Thweatt of Chesterfield County. He died in 1835 and the property, "known as Stony Creek plantation," remained in his estate until conveyed in 1845 to Richard Edward Haskins. There is a record showing Haskins being married to Mary Amanda Thweatt whose exact kinship to Richard Noble Thweatt is not known. On January 20, 1851, a deed was recorded transferring "Stony Creek Plantation" from Haskins and his wife, Louisa E. Haskins, to Richard G. Tucker, Sr., and Isaac Roney. (It is assumed that Mary Amanda had died and Richard Haskins had remarried.) Roney's wife was Mary Green Tucker, sister of Richard. When Richard G. Tucker died in 1857, a provision in his will stated that:

After the death of my wife H. A. Tucker, I give to Harriet O. Roney,
Daughter of Isaac Roney and Mary G., his wife, all my interest in the
Plantation and Mill, to her and her heirs and assigns forever.

Family tradition holds that the Tuckers were childless and took particular interest in the Roney's daughter, Harriet (probably named for her aunt, Harriet Tucker). When Harriet Tucker died in 1860, Harriet Roney came into possession of the property. Harriet Roney married R.C. Shell in 1867. Changes in tax assessments as well as an instrument recorded to assure the payment of three bonds of \$236.00 each at 6% indicate that the addition was constructed 1871-1872. R.C. Shell whose first job after the Civil War was Deputy Clerk of Dinwiddie County, went on to the private practice of law. By 1881, he had been named County Judge and held this position until his death in 1884. The property is still owned by his and Harriet (Roney) Shell's descendants.

NOTE: This information is taken from a detailed study of the records of Prince George and Dinwiddie counties and other sources undertaken by Louis Shell, attorney, of Petersburg, who is the grandson of R.. C. and Harriet R. Shell. His two-part study is on file in archives of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in Richmond..

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Stony Creek Plantation
Dinwiddie County, VA**

Bibliography

Dinwiddie County records.

Prince George County records.

“The Shell Family of Dinwiddie: The Shells, Hills, Roneys, and Mitchells, Stony Creek Plantation.” Manuscript at the Library of Virginia.

“Stony Creek Plantation: The Early Years 1720-1811.” Unpublished manuscript by Louis Shell.

“Stony Creek Plantation: Two-Hundred-Fifty Years of History 1741 – 1991.” Unpublished manuscript by Louis Shell.

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point on the west side of State Route 645 approximately 2600 feet south of the intersection of State Route 645 with State Route 715; then running south following the west side of State Route 645 for approximately 1000 feet to the intersection with State Route 624; then running west following the north side of State Route 624 for approximately 1000 feet; then running north in a straight line for approximately 1000 feet; and then running east in a straight line for approximately 1200 feet to the starting point.

Boundary Justification

The approximately 25 acres being nominated include the house and most of the open land that has historically been associated with the property.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Stony Creek Plantation
Dinwiddie County, VA**

List of Photographs

The following information is common to the following photographs:

DHR negative number: 17532

Date: March 1999

Photographer: John G. Zehmer

1 of 9: South (front) elevation.

2 of 9: East elevation

3 of 9: View from northeast

4 of 9: East chimney

The following information is the same as above, except that the negative number is 17533.

5 of 9: Detail of stair

6 of 9: Door from stair landing to east second-floor room.

The following information is common to the following photographs:

DHR negative number: 20138

Date: May 2002

Photographer: Willie Graham, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

7 of 9: View of front of original dormer in space under later wing roof.

8 of 9: View of cheek of dormer and slope of roof

9 of 9: View of sweep of shingles at intersection of dormer and main roofs.